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in designs for uniforms? Another matter that is more serious, though it also depreciates the looks of troops and discourages enlistment, is the fashion for officers to discard the sword. Whenever a regiment goes by, observe how awkward the officers on foot appear, with not so much as a spontoon in their hand. They have the most helpless, foolish air. They have no gleaming sword with which to salute; they look as though in camp, leading the march to the mess-tent. It is not fair to one's gallant soldiers to make them look like guys merely because the changes in artillery and tactics have reduced the number of cases when a sword is useful in war. Some of the rank and file carry no guns into battle because they have other weapons more efficient for their purpose, but officers do not carry guns, only pistols. Sword and pistol are none too heavy for a man; firearms are soon emptied, but cold steel remains. Let us hope the press will take up this matter and advocate side-arms for officers and handsome togs for our soldiers and sailors. It is childish—indeed it is the act of imbeciles deliberately to prefer the ugly thing and the inept procedure when the opposite is just as easy and more of profit.

#### THE BIG HINDENBURG STATUE

The wooden colossus at Berlin representing Field Marshal von Hindenburg is being studded with bronze, silver and gold nails through the zeal of the faithful, who give so much per nail for the privilege of driving a certain number into the surface of the statue. Is this a revival of some long-forgotten rite in connection with the shapeless effigies, mentioned by Adam of Bremen and other antiquaries of the Middle Ages, as idols of the pagan Slavs who were Christianized at a comparatively late period? Or are there found any traces of a similar rite among the Saxons, who were Christianized offhand and *en masse* by Charlemagne in the eighth century? Did they drive nails in the Irmin-Sul which was supposed to have something to do with Arminius, who slaughtered the legions of Rome under Quintilius Varus in the reign of Augustus? Near Detmold there is a colossal statue of Arminius by Bandel to celebrate this famous Roman defeat, erected in 1875.

The Bible has no certain record of such a rite, although Isaiah says: "Fasten him as a nail in a sure place," and in Ecclesiastes the nail is cited along with the goad as a metaphor for words that drive in an argument: "The words of the wise are as goads and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies." There are, however, traces in Italy of a fashion of driving nails into temple doors or columns, apparently to commemorate certain ideas and keep them in the memory of succeeding generations. In Wiltshire, England, a dagger was found belonging to prehistoric times, the handle of which is decorated. The design is formed by very minute gold nails hammered into the wood.

Perhaps the German instance is merely practical in the first place to cover the statue with metal as a preservative of the wooden surface and in the second to raise a fund for patriotic purposes. If controlled by some one who has an eye for color, this decoration might go far to enhance the beauty of a colossus built of wood, just as in ancient times the Greeks enriched the big wooden statues of certain gods like Zeus, Hera, Poseidon, Athené and

Aphrodité with plaques of ivory and gold. We do not hear from Greece of any popular driving of nails. This appears to belong to an earlier and more barbarous age of religion when the idol was so monstrous that it had to be covered with skins or drapery or with nails or sheets of metal. If it was of stone, gold or silver was beaten thin and hammered onto the surface.

#### SOME NEW BOOKS

*The Ideals of Painting.* By J. Comyns Carr. (New York: The Macmillan Co. 1917) "Art for art's sake," remarks Mr. Carr in the introduction to his new volume "is a heresy of merely modern invention. In literature it has never ranked as anything higher than a sterile motto of men who have renounced the larger functions that belong to the historian of the human soul; while in painting and sculpture it will be found to be always most loudly proclaimed in those recurring seasons of decay when the pride of craftsmanship has supplanted the spontaneous processes of creation." The reader will understand at once that Mr. Carr does not examine the paintings of the past from the stand taken by some of the modern writers. He does not believe that the revolutionary and volcanic discoveries of the "scientific" artists will affect art and he does not try to twist the art of the ancients so as to favor the hopes of the revolutionists. On the other hand Mr. Carr will not be found a humdrum follower of others. He has a personal, sufficiently enlivening style that gives interest to all he has to say.

It must be said that the plan laid down is not conducive to brilliant writing or original. The "ideals" of Italy, Flanders, France are rather nebulous when you come to consider them; the "ideals" of England, Holland and Germany are difficult to fix—and where can we locate those of Spain? Thus we see Mr. Carr by using the big indefinite word "ideals" allows himself no small space to turn about in; but the reader is lucky if he forgets while he reads a superscription that hardly fits the contents.

Mr. Carr, whose "Coasting Bohemia" a book of pleasing essays and whose tragedy "King Arthur" have had success, necessarily from time to time makes statements that other writers will challenge, such as that landscape painting originated with the Venetians—"the discovery of landscape as an independent subject of study was essentially a Venetian discovery. . . . But in the coloring of Venice there was added to this gem-like brilliancy (of Fra Angelico, Van Eyck, Memlinc, etc.) a new beauty that was born of the vitalizing agency of light and shade as they strike into infinite variety the original value of each chosen hue; and this new beauty was directly generated by the observation of the changing moods of weather as they affect and transform the resident facts of landscape." Fewer exceptions will be taken to his views on the evolution of *genre* in Venice.

While considering Rubens in the section devoted to Flemish painting Mr. Carr recalls a statement by his friend Alma-Tadema that every school contains two classes of painters, "those who were form-blind and those who were color-blind" and ranks Rubens among the former. "So inherently feeble indeed was his (Rubens's) apprehension of formal

beauty," *i. e.*, the beauty that exists in form as opposed to color "that in his treatment of the nude, his pitiless portraiture of unselected Flemish types with their redundant folds of glittering but superfluous flesh becomes almost shameful; alike in its ugliness and in its intimacy, we feel instinctively that we have no title to share a revelation that yields no result of beauty." Here again the essayist will find many to disagree with him.

In "Ideals of Holland" speaking of landscape as affected by Rembrandt, with "The Mill" by that master as a text, he says: "We are conscious that the whispered voice which here first finds utterance through the musing spirit of the great Dutchman has travelled far and has still far to travel, bearing this self-same message to the dwellers in every land and of all succeeding ages; for by means *no painter of any school had yet anticipated* Rembrandt contrived to fasten upon the lifeless shapes of the external world a sentiment so deeply human that it ceases to be merely personal, a sentiment inspired by sympathy at once so profound and far-reaching as to endow it with something of universal and epical significance."

*Science and Learning in France. An appreciation.* (New York: Society for American Fellowships in French Universities, 1917.) A stout volume of nearly 500 pages with many portraits and illustrations is composed of essays from a hundred professors belonging to colleges and universities in every part of the Union. The purpose is to present to the public statements by experts as to the contributions to knowledge that France has made in all the fields of science and research, and to show her standing in civilization. The plan for a book of this sort was made in 1915; since then we have become allies of France in the world-war. Ever since 1870 when Bismarck precipitated the war against France with approved Prussian perfidy the American students of art who had hitherto visited Düsseldorf and Munich in considerable numbers turned to Paris. Students of literature and science, however, clung to German schools, because they were under the influence of Carlyle and other British and American writers—although these were celebrating and extolling a period of the German past, long before the German universities, like the German people, had become intoxicated with the poison of megalomania.

It was to present a counterpoise to this insidious doctrine among our college faculties and college men that the book was planned. Gradually it has assumed the character of an American homage to the intellectual vigor of French teachers. Agriculture, botany and zoölogy; chemistry, medicine and

physics; anthropology, archæology and history; astronomy, geography and geology—these and many more fields of education are traversed by Americans who know France, citing the eminent writers and professors, and giving advice how a student should proceed if he wants to take advantage of French schools and colleges. The editor is Prof. John H. Wigmore of Northwestern University assisted by Prof. C. H. Grandgent of Harvard. A list of "sponsors" many hundred in number is given, consisting of American scholars who approve of the publication. It is indeed a notable and noble testimonial on the part of American universities to the schools of learning in France. The dedication: "To the Scholars of France worthy custodians of their Country's intellectual greatness—this volume, prepared in a time when France has reached the heights of moral greatness—is offered with heartfelt Admiration and Sympathy in the name of the Scholars of America."

*The Book of the Peony.* By Mrs. Edward Harding. (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1917.) Many are the books on the flowers of the garden. It is only natural that volumes devoted to a single flower should be appearing, and here is one that takes up the famous blossom to which the ancients gave a name of the gods and ranged along with the peacock among birds as a plant having to do with the sun. The name *paian*, *paiown* harks back to pre-Hellenic days when various departments, such as healing, had not yet been distributed to various gods of Olympus—Apollo, Artemis, Aiskulapios, Paion, etc. The Peony, like many other flowers and fruits, appears to have started on its career of beauty from a more practical stand, namely, as a healing plant. Hence the identification of its name in Greece with the medico of the gods who cures the wounds of Plouton and Ares inflicted by heroic men—Herakles and Diomedes—as we learn from the veracious verses of Homer.

This is a very readable and complete description of peonies past and present illustrated with a score of color-plates and two dozen half-tones, as well as a map to show where on the globe the most important peonies are native growths. There are two plates that show the diseases of a plant once cherished as a healer rather than a splendid feast for the eyes; another gives in color certain peonies we find on porcelain of the *Kang Hsi* period (1662-1796). An appendix indicates the articles and books that treat of the plant, soil, breeding, diseases, etc., and an index gives a final touch of usefulness to a volume that reflects much credit on the authoress.

